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March 5, 2010

Pam Barclay  
Director, Center for Hospital Services  
Department of Health & Mental Hygiene  
Maryland Health Care Commission  
4160 Patterson Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21215-2222

Dear Ms. Barclay:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Maryland Healthcare Commission's PCI Data Workgroup Recommendation. On behalf of the American Heart Association, I offer our support of the recommendations as outlines and are encouraged about the opportunity to expand data collection to include all AMI patients at some point in the future.

The American Heart Association is committed to improving systems of care for heart attack victims who suffer a type of heart attack known as a "ST-elevation myocardial infarction" (STEMI). Through our Mission: Lifeline program, our organization seeks to ensure that healthcare systems are able to deliver prompt and appropriate care to STEMI patients during the critical "golden hour" following their heart attack. Prompt treatment with evidence-based therapies may reduce heart damage, shorten hospital stay and lower the cost of care. The overarching goal of the initiative is to reduce mortality and morbidity for STEMI patients and to improve their overall quality of care. Although Mission: Lifeline is focusing on improving the system of care for the nearly 400,000 patients who suffer from a STEMI each year, improving that system will ultimately improve care for all heart attack patients.

Mission: Lifeline currently anticipates a formal certification program to be rolled out within 12 to 18 months. The Mission: Lifeline Certification Program will acknowledge STEMI Systems, EMS, Non-PCI/STEMI Referral Centers and PCI/STEMI Receiving Centers for their efforts to improve quality of care for STEMI patients. Hospitals must participate in Action Registry-GWTG in order to be eligible for the Mission: Lifeline Certification Program.

ACTION Registry-GWTG will be the largest and most comprehensive national AMI patient database ever developed by the medical profession. It will establish a national standard for understanding and improving the quality, safety and outcomes of care provided for patients with coronary artery disease, specifically, high-risk STEMI and NSTEMI patients.

The American Heart Association looks forward to supporting your efforts in the future and showcasing the phenomenal accomplishments be attained in Maryland.

**Mid-Atlantic Affiliate**

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Thank you for your review and consideration of these comments. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

*Rhonda Ford Chatmon*

Rhonda Ford Chatmon  
Sr. Director, State Health Alliance  
Greater Washington Region/Maryland